



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

MISCELLANY

PHILADELPHIA TO LOSE ART GIFTS?

To the Editor of THE ART WORLD—Sir: Progressive civilization, indicated by the ever-growing interest in matters connected with the Fine and Applied Arts and by the establishment of Municipal Art Museums by many of our newer American cities in widely divergent sections of the country, is without reasonable doubt one of the results of our remarkable success as an industrial community. Let us not deceive ourselves with the shallow deductions of short-sighted theorists who blatantly claim that art should be free from all commercial considerations. It certainly is not now and probably never will be—as any one of even moderate power of observation and unbiased judgment can see for himself. Where would America be to-day, were it not for the generous donations and bequests of our wealthy commercial men and manufacturers of their collections to art museums for the enjoyment and instruction of the public?

One hears it said abroad, very often with a certain significant smile, that Americans do have an unusual power of accumulating colossal fortunes. We admit this without inquiring too closely into the ethical features of the case. The uses of such fortunes in the campaign of the education of the people is what we are mainly concerned with in this connection. It would merely be necessary to point out what has been done in that way in some of our larger Western cities, such as Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit and San Francisco, to prove the assertion that our financiers and leaders of industry have been largely instrumental in giving importance to those communities as art centers. This is all very well as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. What, for instance, could be more humiliating from the point of view of the higher ideals than to see, in the city of Philadelphia, famous from Colonial days as the scene of the activities of some of the most distinguished artists of international reputation, superb accumulations of works of art like the Widener and Johnson collections practically denied proper space for exhibition to the public through the lack of a suitable municipal gallery? Although the erection of the proposed building has been talked of for the past thirty years, the architects plans prepared and revised during the past ten years, and sufficient funds appropriated—yet no move is made beyond leveling the site!

Inexcusable as the situation seems to be, no one yet has been able to assign a cause for the interminable delays. What possible good would be accomplished by the tax-payers' suit recently begun, to block the city from proceeding with the work, it is difficult to conceive. As frequently happens in suits of this kind, there is inevitably engendered in the minds of those who put two and two together a suspicion that this one has been secretly instigated by parties "higher up" whose importance in the world of art might be seriously

diminished by the erection of a museum worthy of the city that Gilbert Stuart, the Peales, Benjamin West, Thomas Sully and a host of modern men have made famous. One might say *se non é vero é ben trovato* and meanwhile this shameful condition of things threatens to take a more serious turn. There is imminent danger, seeing that many other cities have provided accommodation for important collections of art works, that Philadelphia may lose a greater part of its inheritance, of value almost inestimable, through failure of appropriate space for installation. This loss would be irreparable and would be a lasting reflection upon the judgment of the municipality.

Eugene Castello
Philadelphia

THE PROPOSED SUNKEN GARDEN, CENTRAL PARK, MANHATTAN

A very pretty suggestion has been made in New York with reference to a reservoir in Central Park, Manhattan, which was part of the old Croton water system and can now be turned aside to other purposes. At least the site of the reservoir can. It lies between the Natural History and Metropolitan Museums and forms a hill of no mean elevation, whence one can partly discern the lay of the park.

The pretty suggestion is to utilize the hollow of the empty reservoir as an open-air theatre or stadium for monster concerts and popular pageants and treat the rest of the hollow left by the lake as a great sunken garden with decorations in architecture, a fountain and other sculpture. Plans have been issued and enthusiasm has been brought to bear; some editors have been generously moved to "boom" the idea and others have attacked the project.

And in fact the more one considers the matter, the more one concludes: the originators of this plan have hold of an excellent idea, but they have mistaken the place! As the city grows thicker and thicker round Central Park one feels the need of reducing rather than increasing the architecture that is not absolutely necessary. One sees at a glance that the Metropolitan and Natural History Museums themselves are absorbing the area about them as they grow, and one can not help sympathizing with citizens who urge the pulling down of any unnecessary structure in the parks.

If in the eyes of these "improvers" of Central Park the large sum of money necessary to this transformation seems a bagatelle, they may listen with respect to the argument of emplacement. Surely this is not the best spot for a huge concourse where citizens meet in their thousands. Large avenues of approach and surrounding squares would be needed for the coming and going of many thousands without detriment to the park. If an amphitheatre for large crowds is needed, Van